[Shrimati Pratibha Devisingh Patil]

Sir, we have preserved our freedom, our democracy and our Parliamentary system of Government in spite of the odds, stresses and strains since we became independent. There were many internal disturbances and external aggressions as well. But we have been able to preserve our democracy because of the Indian people and the Indian leaders of the past and the present as well. Sir, we have built up some high traditions in this House. We have always tried to preserve dignity and decorum in the discussions in the House.

Sir, Rajya Sabha is supposed to be the House of Elders though I see many youngsters sitting here. I know and I have observed that though they are young, they are quite seasoned, they have lot of experience in their own field of work, they are quite mature in their attitude and in their thoughts and, therefore, they are no less than the elders. Therefore, I know, my task is not going to be difficult to control the House though there are many youngsters sitting here.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI (Maharashtra): You are also young at heart.

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA DEVISINGH PATIL: Sir, once again, I would like to thank all hon. Members. As you know—and I also know—they are very sensible people and, therefore, it will not be a difficult job for me to control the House.

Last but not the least, I would like to urge upon this House, through you, Sir, that Members would come and go, Chairmen would come and go Deputy Chairmen would come and go, Governments would come and go, but the dignity and decorum of the House would go on record to preserve and to mark the history of the Indian Parliamentary system. Therefore, let us rededicate ourselves to the high ideals and preserve our democracy. We have the fortune and we have the honour of being the Members of this House, of this august body, the highest body of our motherland. Therefore, the responsibility is more on our shoulders. I do hope, it will be possible for us to take this country on the path of progress, maintaining all these traditions and look after the welfare of the poor, the welfare of the country and the progress of all our people. Once again, I thank hon. Members for electing me as the Deputy Chairman of this august body. I thank them for the trust they have reposed in me. Sir, I will always seek your guidance in conducting the business of this House. Once again, I thank you all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I now invite the Deputy Chairman to take the Chair. I wish you all the best.

[The Deputy Chairman in the Chair]

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

Inquiry report on the incident of fire at Hotel Sidharth Continental, New Delhi and related papers

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): Sir, on behalf of Shri Buta Singh, I beg to lay on the Table a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following papers:—

(i) Justice D. R. Khanna Commission of Inquiry Report on the incident of fire at Hotel Sidharth Continental, New Delhi.

(ii) Memorandum of action taken by Government on the Report.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT—3226|86 for (i) and (ii)].

APPRENTICESHIP (SECOND AMENDMENT) RULES, 1986

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table, under sub-section (3) of Section 37 of the Apprentices Act, 1961, a copy (in English and Hindi) of the Ministry of Labour (Directorate General of Employment and Training), Notification G.S.R.